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CHRISTMAS AT THE UNIVERSITY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL

MRS. FRANK HUGH MONTGOMERY
Secretary of the Parents' Association of the School of Education

For many weeks before December 22, when the Christmas festivities were held at the School of Education, the spirit of the day had been growing in the thought and work of the children. The presents for the fathers and mothers were treasured as delightful secrets, and were the objects of much careful, patient, loving work. The thought of giving and sharing did not stop with the home, but reached out in playing Santa Claus to the children at the Home of the Friendless through the bright scrapbooks made by the kindergarten children, to individual families of the destitute, to children's clubs at two of the settlements, and in other ways. Thus the little people were all ready for Christmas Day at the school, and eager to have the parents come and join in the good time.

A most fitting introduction was the morning exercises, to which guests could not be invited on account of lack of room. The earnestness and feeling which the children showed in the singing of the Christmas songs, the attention with which they listened to the reading by Miss Fleming of the first Christmas, and to Mr. Jackman's simple talk about the Christmas message of good-will, which belonged to each and which each could bestow, evinced that the preparation had been a real and a beautiful one. The program in detail was as follows:

Song, "Ye Shepherds, Arise!" *Carl Reinecke*
Scripture Reading *Miss Fleming*

i. Prophecies:

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation; that saith unto Zion, Thy God reigneth!"

"For unto us a child is born, for unto us a son is given: and the government shall be upon his shoulder: and his name shall be called Wonderful, Counselor, The Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace," etc.

2. The Magnificat } St. Luke
 The Nativity }

3. The Three Wise Men St. Matthew
 Christmas sentence, "Glory to God in the Highest" *Crosby-Adams*
 "Why Do Bells for Christmas Ring?" *F. W. Root*
 Address, "The Christmas Message" *Mr. Jackman*
 "Now He Who Knows Old Christmas"

From these exercises the children went either to their respective graderooms or to the German play, as the room was not large enough to accommodate all at the same time. Twice the room was thronged with children and guests to see the German play. One of the boys gave a little outline of the play as it had been arranged by the class, and when the screens were withdrawn, the audience murmured a hearty approval of the perfect little forest presented to their gaze. A little glade in the midst of the fir trees weighed down by the new-fallen snow gave space for the players, and the gnomes seemed to appear as if by magic. It was a scene of great simplicity and effectiveness.

DIE TANNENFEE

(*Ein Weihnachtsspiel*)

PERSONEN

LIESE, GRETEL, MARIE — drei Bauernkinder.

KNARRE, KREISEL, WALDTEUFEL — Kobolde.

RUPRECHT — ein Waldgeist.

DIE TANNENFEE.

Scene: Ein dunkler Tannenwald. Die Erde ist mit Schnee bedeckt.

(Drei Mädchen kommen. Ein Mädchen trägt einen Korb mit Aepfeln. Sie suchen einen Weg.)

LIESE: Ich weiss nicht, wo wir sind, Marie. Da ist wieder der alte Tannenbaum.

MARIE: Ich glaube, da sitzt wieder der alte Kobold hinter dem Baum. Nein, er ist fort.

GRETEL: Nein, da ist der Kobold wieder; ich habe ihn gesehen

LIESE: Kommt, lasst uns fort gehen; mir ist bange.

MARIE: Ja, lasst uns eilen; es ist so dunkel hier.

GRETEL: Lauft, lauft! Ich sehe wieder einen Kobold.

(*Die Mädchen gehen schnell fort, Drei Kobolde springen auf die Bühne. Dann kommt Ruprecht.*)

KREISEL: Herum, herum, immer im Kreise herum! Wo sind die Mädchen?

KNARRE: Knarr, knarr, wo sind die Kinder?

WALDTEUFEL: Brumm, brumm, wo sind sie?

KREISEL: Heisa, heisa, dideldumdei! Ich suche die Mädchen; sie sollen das Weihnachts fest nicht feiern.

KNARRE: Heute ist Weihnachten und das ist ärgerlich für einen Kobold. Ich will die Kinder necken und erschrecken.

WALDTEUFEL: Ich will brummen, tief und laut, dass sie sich fürchten.

ALLE DREI: Heissa, holla, kommt, lasst uns gehen.

(*Ruprecht kommt mit einem Besen.*)

RUPRECHT: Recht so, recht so, meine lieben kleinen Waldgesellen! Führt die Kinder in die Irre. Kreisel, hüpfen und tanze! Knarre, schnurre und knarre! Teuflein, schnarre und brumme! Die Kinder sind dort auf dem Weg. Folgt mir, wir wollen sie erschrecken, damit sie den Weg nach Hause nicht finden.

(*Die Gnomen gehen ab. Man hört die Kobolde lärmend und die Kinder schreien.*)

LIESE: Lauft, lauft! Die Kobolde holen uns ein.

GRETEL: Hört, wie sie brummen und schrei'n.

MARIE: Und die Nacht ist so dunkel; es ist kein Stern am Himmel.

RUPRECHT (*zu Liese*): Halt, nicht weiter!

KREISEL (*zu Gretel*): Steh still, du dummes Ding!

KNARRE (*zu Marie*): Du musst hier bleiben.

(*Die Kobolde und Ruprecht schliessen einen Kreis um die Kinder.*)

KOBOLDE: Kommt, lasst uns tanzen!

LIESE: Fort mit euch, ihr Kobolde!

RUPRECHT: Still! Willst du meinen Besen fühlen?

MARIE: Was sollen wir tun?

LIESE: Wir wollen beten. (*Die Kinder knien nieder.*) Ach, lieber Gott im Himmel, hilf uns armen Kindern!

(*Die Kobolde verschwinden.*)

LIESE: O Gretel, die Kobolde sind weg.

MARIE: Wo, sind sie geblieben?

GRETEL: Gott hat uns geholfen. Aber ich kann nicht mehr gehen, ich bin zu müde.

MARIE: Und der Kopf tut mir weh. Lasst uns hier bleiben bis morgen früh.

LIESE: Aber Vater und Mutter wissen nicht, wo wir sind, und wir haben doch die Aepfel für das kranke Brüderchen.

GRETEL: Ach, Liese, die Aepfel duften so süß.

MARIE: Lass mich die Aepfel nur einmal sehen.

(*Liese öffnet den Korb.*)

LIESE: Ja, schau nur, wie rosig sie sind.

MARIE: Sieh, was für schöne rote Backen dieser Aepfel hat.

GRETEL: O, und dieser, wie gut er schmecken würde.

LIESE: Aber wir dürfen doch die Aepfel nicht essen. Ich will den Korb zumachen.

GRETEL: Aber einen Aepfel können wir doch essen, nur einen.

MARIE: Ach, ja, Liese, einen Aepfel nur. Reich mir den Korb, bitte!

GRETEL: Beiss' einmal in diesen Aepfel, Liese!

LIESE: Nein, Gretel, ich will mein Versprechen nicht brechen.

MARIE: Und ich auch nicht. Wurf den Aepfel in den Korb, Gretel!

GRETEL: Aber mich hungert so.

LIESE: Kommt, lasst uns ein Wiehnachtslied singen; das wird den Hunger vertreiben.

DIE KINDER (*singen*): "Stille Nacht, heilige Nacht."

(*Sie schlafen ein.*)

TANNENFEE: Schlaft ohne Sorgen; die Tannenfee wird euch beschützen.

LIESE: Was sehe ich?

GRETEL: Wovon träume ich?

MARIE: Wer bist du?

TANNENFEE: Ich bin die Tannenfee. Der immergrüne

Tannenwald ist meine Wohnung. Ich bin hier, wenn der Kuckuck ruft und die Sonne lacht, wenn der tiefe Schnee auf den Bäumen liegt und im Mondenschein glitzert.

(Sie verschwindet. Die Kobolde kommen.)

RUPRECHT: Schämt euch, ihr dummen Kobolde! Ein Kinderwort hat euch fortgetrieben.

KREISEL: Ha, ha, ha, du bist schnell genug mitgelaufen.

KNARRE: Heissa, da liegen die Kinder.

WALDTEUFEL: Kommt, wir wollen sie necken.

KREISEL: Ich will sie am Armel zupfen.

KNARRE: Ich will sie an den Haaren ziehen.

WALDTEUFEL: Und ich will ihnen die Aepfel fortnehmen. Komm' Ruprecht, tu' auch mit.

RUPRECHT: Ich weiss nicht, wie mir zu Mute ist. Die Kinder schlafen so schön, ich kann sie nicht necken.

(Die Tannenfee kommt.)

KOBOLDE: O weh, o weh, die Tannenfee!

KINDER: Die Tannenfee!

TANNENFEE: Ja, ich bin die Tannenfee, und ich will euch helfen, denn ihr seid brave Kinder. Aber euch Kobolde will ich bestrafen; ihr sollt jetzt alle stumm sein.

TANNENFEE: Du, Kreisel, sollst jetzt immer für Kinder springen. Du, Knarre, sollst jetzt immer für Kinder knarren. Du, Waldteufel, sollst jetzt immer für Kinder brummen. Du aber, Ruprecht, du hast ein gutes Herz, du sollst Christkindleins Knecht werden. Du sollst den Kindern zu Weihnachten Spielzeug und Aepfel bringen, wenn sie brav sind, aber du bringst ihnen die Rute, wenn sie unartig sind. Jetzt geh' in den Wald und suche den schönsten Tannenbaum, welchen du finden kannst. Komm', Ruprecht, mach' schnell! Hol' den Sack da, Ruprecht! Lass die Kinder hinein sehen.

LIESE: O, die wunderschöne Puppe!

GRETEL: O, der grosse Ball!

MARIE: O die vielen, vielen Kuchen!

TANNENFEE: Gieb' jedem Kind ein Spielzeug.

KINDER: Danke, danke sehr, lieber Ruprecht!

TANNENFEE: Nun, schmücke den Baum, Ruprecht, und

dann bring' die Kinder nach Hause. Ihr aber, Kinder, singt mir ein Weihnachtslied.

KINDER (*singen*): "O Tannenbaum." (*Die Tannenfee verschwindet.*)

RUPRECHT: Kommt, Kinder, wir gehen nach Hause.

KINDER: Wir gehen nach Hause, nach Hause!

During the middle of the forenoon there were four combinations of groups. The French carolers visited each in turn. The first and eighth grades met in the kindergarten room, the little tots having had their celebration the day before. Games were played in which the big children showed a nice spirit and a sympathetic feeling toward their young partners. The first grade gave a dramatized version of "The Night Before Christmas." There were the father, the mother, and three children, the reindeer with fierce horns on their foreheads, and a fat little Santa Claus who could not reach the stockings, as they hung in front of the high chimney. The eighth grade contributed these two original verses:

CHRISTMAS

Christmas time is coming,
When all the world is gay;
Christmas bells are ringing,
And Santa's on his way.

Stockings full of presents,
Hanging, bulging out.
All the world is pleasant
When Santa's round about.

Lovely Christmas evergreens,
Decked with sparkles bright;
Little Christmas angels,
And candles flickering light.

Now the presents given;
Santa goes away,
Wishing to the children
A merry Christmas Day.

The air is clear,
And Christmas is here,
 And the cold north wind is blowing.
Holly wreaths green
In the windows are seen;
 In the house the Christmas tree's glowing.

Church bells are ringing,
And children are singing,
 Chanting their songs of praise.
Hurrah for old Christmas
And the good things it brings us!
 Hurrah for the holidays!

Santa is here
With his swift reindeer
 And a pack full of beautiful toys.
Down the chimney he comes,
With dolls and with drums
 For good little girls and boys.

The second, fourth, and sixth grades had a happy time with games, songs, and a piano selection by one of the children. The story of St. Christopher was told, and refreshments were served, the cookies having been made from flour ground by the children themselves.

The third grade and one division of the seventh began their festivities with a German song—"Kling, Glöcklein, kling," by Reinecke. The older children recited Christmas poetry. The group was visited by the French carolers and English waites. They went to the German play together and returned. The third grade recited "The Night Before Christmas." One of the seventh-grade boys, in the guise of Father Christmas, distributed stockings filled with candy, salted peanuts, and popcorn. The younger children had made the stockings and prepared the peanuts and the popcorn, whereas the candy represented the work of the seventh-grade children.

The meeting of the fifth and seventh grades was an exchange of gifts. The fifth had candy which they had made for their seventh-grade friends and the seventh had presents for the fifth. Songs were sung, but the chief entertainment was the reading by one of the college students of "The Ruggles' Christmas Dinner," from the *Bird's Christmas Carol*.

To the eighth grade belonged the yule-log festivities, which will be described later.

But the march of the French carolers must be followed as they passed from group to group. One of the children first gave the following account of *noël* in France:

NOËL

In France, especially on the south, Christmas is a more religious festival than with us. It is the time of almsgiving, but the chief gift season with the French is New Year's Day. Many of the beautiful old-fashioned customs still existing in the south have died away in the north and in cities under the influence of commerce and foreign peoples.

The ceremonies connected with Christmas have always been filled with joy, and this gaiety finds expression in ways more or less unique. The people have always sung carols, songs in genuine patois, or even the older Low Latin, which possesses remarkable simplicity and naïveté. The formal poetic value of these carols is almost nothing; they are as rustic as the peasants who are supposed to sing them.

In the south, particularly, the festival of Christmas is a time of some quite special manifestations which recall singularly certain pagan customs. On Christmas eve the festival is opened by a great supper. The table is set before the fire, where burns, crowned with laurels, an old yule-log, dried and kept with affectionate care for this triple solemnity of the Christmas-tide. Just before seating themselves at the table, the family makes an offering to the fire—a habit that savors of old-time idolatry. Only the sweet innocence of a very young child is considered worthy to utter the prayer and present the offering to the fire. The youngest child, therefore, kneels before the hearth, now for the

time an altar, and prays, following the mother's words, that the fire will warm well during the long winter the tender feet of all young orphans and weak old people; that it will send its light and heat into all poor garrets; that it will not devour the laborer's thatch nor the boat which rocks the sailor on distant seas. Then he pours upon the fire a libation of cooked wine as a symbol of life and health; and the old olive trunk answers with joyous cracklings and hissings, and sends its fumes out into the eager air like messengers of the *spirit of good-will to all men*.

At this moment a bell is heard outside, announcing our Lady of the Christmas. She enters, clad and veiled in white, and accompanied by carolers who sing a joyous canticle of the season. The guests are asked to share in the feast, especially in the Christmas cake, which has received the cook's very best care and which has the place of honor in the feast. The guests then pass on to other homes, and after the supper is over, the family gathers once more around the fire. There they sing carols till midnight, when they all go to the church to hear early mass.

During the whole of this night the poor are allowed to beg publicly, while chanting their carols. From the windows the children throw alms to them in little bags, which are set ablaze at one end, that they may be seen when they fall. They are like falling stars of heaven.

As the pupil finished, a woman in a bright peasant costume was seen seated by the fireside. Her child knelt beside her and repeated the Christmas prayer for all the orphaned and fatherless, for the aged and infirm, for all in peril by land or sea, and begged for them the Christmas blessing. Music was heard without.

The door was opened. First entered the Christmas spirit—a little child clad in white and veiled. Next marched, as in older times, three who represented Europe, Asia, and Africa, in costumes which the children considered appropriate. In gorgeous yellow, with golden miters, came the high prelates of the church; for the church must be first. These garments were the children's hand-work. Then followed the shepherds; and next came the peasants, bearing candles and joining in the procession. The

À BETHLÉEM

À Beth - lé - em, quand en - fant vint à na - ître, Quoi-qu'il fit
 nuit, Le ciel é - tait brill - ant Comme en plein
 jour, Et l'on vit ap - pa - rai - tre Un as - tre é - blouis -
 sant, Qui con - du - sait les ma - ges d'o - ri - ent.

guests were treated to the Christmas cake, which had been most carefully prepared. They joined in a hymn about the hearthstone, and passed on their way to gladden and receive from other homes.

ENTRE LE BŒUF ET L'ÂNE GRIS

En - tre le boe - uf et l'ane gris Dort, dort
 le pe - tit fils. Mille an - ges di - vi - ns, Mille sé - ra - phins,
 Volent à l'en-tour De ce Dieu d'amour, De ce Dieu d'a - mour.

All the morning the hand-work done by the pupils throughout the quarter was on exhibition in the art, textile, and lunch-rooms. It presented a great variety and showed the individual tastes of the children. Of course, much of it centered about the Christmas work, as gifts for the parents. The kindergarten had as a group made thirteen scrapbooks and a number of colored clay-balls,

and individually had made napkin-rings, tea-rests, penwipers, match-scratchers, blotters with calendars pasted on, and scrap-books of madonna pictures. The older children made these last two in larger sizes, and the average number of articles made by the younger pupils was four; of the older, six.

The work of the children beyond the kindergarten, was even more varied. The clay-modeling was of necessity confined to two grades for the autumn quarter. These were the third and the fourth. They made jars, candlesticks, pin-trays, bowls, tiles, vases, statues, inkstands, dishes, collar-button trays, match-boxes, a Dutch shoe, and a squirrel. Each child chose his coloring, and in short did all the work except the actual firing. The results of their labors were good in form and color, and often a thing of beauty as well as utility. The ingenuities of the third-grade children, however, were not confined to clay. They found expression in more than creditable articles, such as portfolios, handkerchief holders, a chair picture-frame, ash-tray, needle- and spool-holder, needle-case, paper- and envelope-holders, and hat- and hairpin-holders, all of which testified to a close connection between the school and the home in the thought of the child. The work which the fourth-grade children did in wood showed that they loved their work and found it an interesting and adequate mode of expression. The polished fern-stands of hard wood, and many another piece fashioned with loving care, bore evidence of good work on the part of both pupil and teacher.

With the fifth grade a more pronounced difference between the tastes of boys and girls appeared, for some reason or other, although there were overlappings which would eliminate any hard and fast lines. A doll's chair and bed were in close proximity to an electric switch and a bread-board. Handbags of linen with decorations of original designs, turn-over collars, and center-pieces, were testimonials to the neat sewing of the girls. A pin-tray and a table stood in antithesis, both good. Fern- and music-stands, book-racks, waste-baskets, ink-stands, blotters, paper-knives, footstools, picture-frame, and card-trays again betokened individuality.

Difference in material was a feature of the sixth-grade



FIG. 1.—Work in Pottery and Plaster and Designs in Color. College and Elementary School.



FIG. 2.—Clay and Wood Work. College and Elementary School.

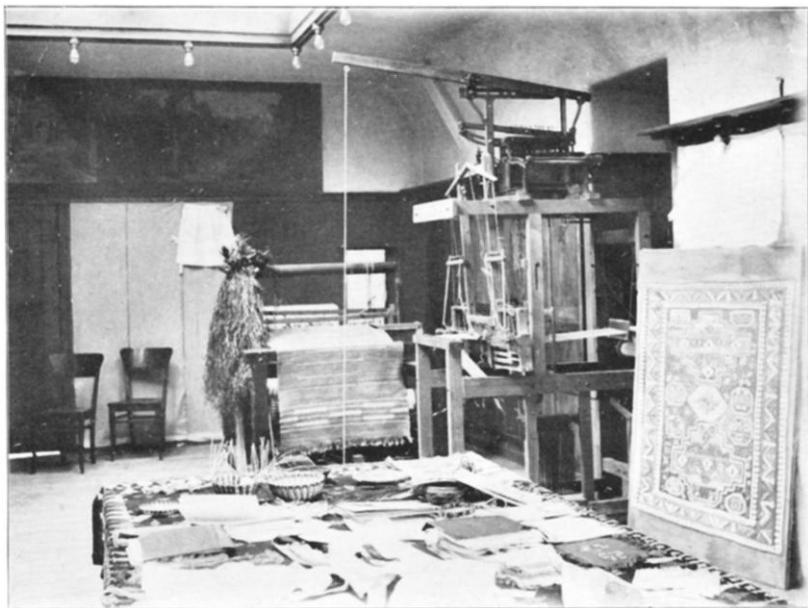


FIG. 3.—Work in Textiles. College and Elementary School.



FIG. 4.—Work in Design and in Wood. Elementary School.

manual training: articles in gum wood, mahogany, pine, and oak, on the one hand, and linen and leather table and tabouret covers, lamp mats, doilies, and centerpieces, on the other. As small a thing as a penholder, and as large a one as a window-box, received the same care. An oak plank for fish and a rocking-chair vied with each other in homeliness, while many of the articles enumerated in the other grades had a showing.

With the seventh grade the work naturally showed more skill and ability. The girls tried their hands at sewing aprons and lace-trimmed handkerchiefs, pin-cushions, and bags. There were the same articles in wood, while a tea-table, letter-box, and stamp-box lent additional variety.

In the portion devoted to the eighth grade the sewing on aprons, underclothes, bags, and scarfs stood in even stronger contrast to the tables, picture-frames, stools, inkstands, pen-trays, and plate- and bookracks of the sloyd-room.

It is impossible to enumerate all the hand-work of the exhibit. The accompanying illustrations will give a fair idea of portions of it. The work was certainly very creditable, and the results of the advantages of hand-training self-evident. The most skeptical critic of this phase of modern elementary education would have been quite converted.

The concluding festivities of the day were in the hands of the eighth grade. Throughout the building they had spread the Christmas decorations, with emphasis on the entrance hall. Down the corridors, from east to west, toward this point came groups, resplendent in color, all who had worn costumes in the various exercises of the day—French peasants, German children, the high prelates of the church of the Middle Ages, and the gnomes of the forest. They, together with many guests, gathered about the hearthstone. Then up rose a lad who cried:

England was merry England when
Old Christmas brought his sports again.
'Twas Christmas broached the mightiest ale;
'Twas Christmas told the merriest tale.
A Christmas carol oft could cheer
The poor man's heart through half the year.
On Christmas Eve the bells were rung;

On Christmas Eve the mass was sung—
 That only night in all the year
 Saw the stoled priest the chalice rear.
 The damsel donned her kirtle sheen;
 The hall was dressed in holly green;
 Forth to the wood did merry men go
 To gather in the mistletoe;
 Then opened wide the baron's hall
 To vassal, tenant, serf and all.
 Power laid his rod of rule aside,
 And ceremony doffed his pride.
 The heir, with roses in his shoes,
 That night might village partner choose;
 The lord, underogating, share
 The vulgar game of "Post and pair."
 All hailed with uncontrolled delight
 And general voice the happy night,
 That to the cottage, as the crown,
 Brought tidings of salvation down.

—Sir Walter Scott.

As he finished speaking, the host and hostess of the yule-log festivities entered. Following them strode the butler, with all-important air, bearing the hot drinks. Into the wassail bowl, trimmed with holly and ivy, upon the roasted apples, was poured the steaming cider, made fragrant with spices. Then arrived the guests, with cordial greetings from host and hostess, and were treated to cakes and cider. The host then cried:

Come, bring with a noise,
 My merry, merry boys,
 The Christmas log to the firing,
 While my good dame, she
 Bids ye all be free,
 And drink to your heart's desiring.

Whereupon entered the servants bearing the yule-log, which was lighted with last year's brand to the words:

With the last year's brand
 Light the new block, and
 For good success in his spending,
 On your psalteries play,
 That sweet luck may
 Come while the log is a-tending.

The hostess heaped on more wood, saying :

Heap on more wood! — the wind is chill;
 But let it whistle as it will,
 We'll keep our Christmas merry still.
 Each age has deem'd the new-born year
 The fittest time for festal cheer;
 Even, heathen yet, the savage Dane
 At Iol more deep the mead did drain;
 High on his beach his galleys drew,
 And feasted all his pirate crew.

She then treated the servants to a drink from the Christmas bowl, and had barely finished when the waites came caroling : “God rest ye, merry gentlemen!” As they finished, they stood back to admit Father Christmas, clad in a long, flowing gown of beautiful green and ermine. All joined in singing, “Now he who knows old Christmas.” The host greeted Father Christmas who threw favors from his sack to the guests. Three boys then recited :

OLD CHRISTMAS RETURNED

All you that to feasting and mirth are inclined,
 Come, here is good news for to pleasure your mind,
 Old Christmas is come to keep open house,
 He scorns to be guilty of starving a mouse:
 Then come, boys, and welcome for diet the chief,
 Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minced pies, and roast beef.

The holly and ivy about the walls wind
 And show that we ought to our neighbors be kind,
 Inviting each other for pastime and sport,
 And where we best fare, there we most do resort;
 We fail not of victuals, and that of the chief,
 Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minced pies, and roast beef.

All travelers, as they do pass on their way,
 At gentlemen's halls are invited to stay,
 Themselves to refresh, and their horses to rest,
 Since that he must be old Christmas' guest;
 Nay, the poor shall not want, but have for relief,
 Plum-pudding, goose, capon, minced pies, and roast beef.

— *Old Carol.*

And all were bidden to dinner.

So ended a happy day of revels, in which the Christmas spirit loomed large and sweet, and the parents went home to wish that they had lived in the school days of the present instead of those of long ago. By dividing the school into groups of older and younger children, and by moving from place to place, the exercises had a simplicity and a freedom from that stiffness and striving for effect which render harmful many "closing exercises." The sweetness and thoughtfulness of the older children toward the younger, the absence of the "I am bigger and wiser than you" atmosphere, and the lack of self-consciousness on the part of those who contributed to the entertainment were most noticeable. Above all shone out the spirit of good-will and of helpfulness. The German play was given twice, and the French carolers went to four different places, showing the same interest and earnestness the last even as the first time.